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ABSTRACT

Utilizing statistical documentation from a variety of sources, this report traces the history of rural schools and the consolidation movement via a review of the literature. Attention is devoted to: (1) the early rural school (beginning in 1647 with Massachusetts); (2) schools in the South (emphasis on private instruction); (3) the effect of changes in rural life on rural schools (contact with urban centers and most particularly the influence of rural to urban migration); (4) the contrast between urban and rural schools (inequities in facilities, teacher preparation, per pupil expenditures, curriculum, school term length, and the education of Negroes); (5) genesis of the consolidation movement and its advantages (better equipped teachers and schools, better curriculum, improved roads for transportation, extracurricular activities, competition, etc.); (6) types of consolidation plans (township, multiple-district county, and county organization); (7) effects of school consolidation (advantages vs disadvantages); (8) policy implications (how school/community organizations can respond to community interests, education for rural/urban living can be responsive to social change, how rural education programs can be designed to meet needs of all students, and how inequities can be resolved between educational opportunities in rural and urban areas). (JC)

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# THE CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS:

## Reasons, Results, and Implications --

## A Preliminary Investigation[1]

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# THE CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS:

## Reasons, Results, and Implications -- A Preliminary Investigation

From early colonial times the education of children and youth in rural America has been largely determined by the way of life of the rural population. Many changes have occurred in American rural life in the last one hundred years, which in turn have had multiple consequences in the educational system of the country. The characteristics of rural America by the end of the nineteenth century, namely the self-dependence of the rural home and rural community, have been replaced by a permanent interaction with the urban setting socially, industrially, politically and religiously. Four factors have been clearly identified as involved as changes of the most fundamental habits, customs, and economic activities of rural America; they are: industrial development, commercialization, urbanization, and technological advance (Johnstone, 1940).

There was question about what the rural school should do while facing the changes in the socio-economic conditions of rural American people. The rural families had utilized the school as the supplementary institution for the purpose of training their children in reading, writing, and ciphering. New changes were then suggested in the objectives of the rural school (Butterworth and Dawson, 1952).

This paper analyzes the development of the rural school system in America, and the factors that resulted in the consolidation of rural schools. The paper also considers implications of the consolidation movement for the life of rural America.

The Early Rural School

For many years the rural school was thought of as a small school consisting of one or two teachers, located usually in the open country (Butterworth and Dawson, 1952). This conception of the school corresponded to the kind of educational center that prevailed in the little towns and villages. By 1918 there were 215,000 of those schools in the nation. For many people they were the only place where children could secure basic training for coping with the demands of rural life.

Such schools were one of the results of village life in America. By 1647, only twenty years after the landing of the Mayflower, the records of Massachusetts gave testimony to the existence of laws requiring the establishment of such schools (Kreitlow, 1954). The passage of the Bay Colony Statutes in the colonial assembly ordered that "...every township within this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall then forthith appoint one teacher within their town to teach all such children as should resort to him, to write and read; whose wages shall be paid, either by the parents or masters of such children, or by the inhabitants in general, by way of supply...and it is further ordered that where any town shall increase to the number of one hundred families or householders, they shall set up a grammar school, the master thereof being able to instruct youth so far as they may be fitted for the university, and if any town neglect the performance thereof, above one year, then every such town shall pay five pound per annum to the next such school, till they shall perform this order" (Boone, 1903: 44-45).

These were not public schools; however they were supported by householders. When settlers from the East coast moved to the West, a prominent concern was the development of school districts administered either independently or dependent upon the larger unit of which the town was a part. This was the time (1784) when the term "township" was adopted in a congressional committee headed by Thomas Jefferson. Basically the bill provided that lands should be divided into townships ten miles square and subdivided into 100 sections of 640 acres each. Townships were six miles square with 36 sections of 640 acres (Smith, 1947). The county unit became an important unit from the political and administrative point of view (Knight, 1922; Slacks, 1938). In some states such as New York and Ohio, where the settler was preceded by the surveyor, the establishment of the division of regions in townships of six square miles was planned for purposes of school organization rather than for purposes of government and trade. The one teacher school became in these socio-cultural conditions the standard unit in the majority of rural farm communities (Slacks, 1938).

## The South's Schools

The development of education in the South was affected by factors such as the presence of the plantation system, slavery, and many poor small farmers. Elementary training was provided through private tutoring of children at home. Education was not available for those who could not pay the tutor (Knight, 1922).

For high school instruction, the most prosperous families sent their children to England or New England. After 1653, the children

of the aristocrats went to William and Mary, the highest educational center in Virginia.

Later on, with the increasing number of householders and slaves on the plantations, private schools were created as well as academies to prepare students for college training. The tenants' and small farmers' children never had the advantages of education at that time. It was not until Reconstruction that public schools were established in the South (Knight, 1922). The influence of the planter class and the scattered population made the county the unit of local government, and also the unit of organization and administration of schools. The county system contributed significantly in the South to the development of its rural schools.

## Changes In Rural Life and In The Rural Schools

Changes in rural life were brought about by a host of factors in rural and urban areas. Butterworth and Dawson (1952) illustrate the gradual bridge developing between farmers and urban areas which basically involved industrial and commercial activities. Rural families became acquainted with urban aspects such as magazines, newspapers, radio, and urban schools. Another important development was the differential between labor conditions on the farm and in the city which became wider in terms of hours, pay, and division of labor.

Perhaps even more important to the consequent changes in rural schools was the migration from rural to urban areas. The factors which prompted this exodus are extrapolated from Smith (1974: 15-31) who was a first hand observer of this phenomenon.

1. The Decline of "Frontier Psychology," which in effect meant the nation's frontier days had ended. Heretofore economic woes, whatever their stature, had been solved by going west. The city became the new place to go rather than the frontier which was virtually non-existant. In effect the urban areas became the new frontier.

2. Earlier sources of people to maintain and build cities had been quieted by immigration laws and depletion of earlier rural migrants. New sources were mainly rural people (midwest, great plains, south, mountain, and pacific areas) who began to move to urban areas in huge numbers. Participants were mainly share croppers, wage hands, and subsistence farmers.

3. Another key factor was the industrial plants in the cities began to produce the energy to be used on farms. The use of horses and mules on the farm changed to trucks and tractors.

4. Many observers consider the movement from general or subsistence farming as the employer of last resort to public relief and welfare as the pivotal variable in the rural to urban migration.

5. The advent of the factory system and the subsequent ripple effect brought about the cessation of many economic pursuits in rural communities. Location of specialized business in urban areas prompted many rural residents to migrate.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 convey the shifting of wealth and population from rural to urban areas. (Insert tables 1-3 here) Key aspects of these tables which should be noted are not only the monetary outflow, but the steady drop in rural farm population and the slow growth of rural non-farm population, which is an early indication of the suburban movements. Smith (1974: 34) indicates that from 1933 to 1970 the net migration from farms was more than 30 million.

Besides migration, other changes occurred in rural farm life. The use of oil, improvements in farm equipment, and tools for more effective farming increased interest in the commercial aspect. The farmer learned to seek profit if he wanted to be successful. At the

home level, "store-bought" clothing and sewing machines were demanded. Additionally, interest in facilities for transportation made city life accessible to the rural inhabitant. Cars became almost a necessity for the rural families who began to participate more frequently in urban activities such as trade, shopping, social life, church, and schools. In a relatively short period the railroad, trucks and buses became efficient means of transportation (The Committee on Rural Education, 1943).

Inevitably, improvements in transportation and the construction of better roads brought more effective educational opportunities to many rural children and adults. All-weather roads to the cities were available for thirty-two and forty-seven per cent of the farms in 1930 and 1940 respectively. Some rural schools began to enjoy the visit of "bookmobiles" and traveling teachers of music, art, and physical education. Teachers of vocational agriculture were able to extend their activities to many rural regions, and many rural schools received visits from the 4H Club leader and the county nurse (The Committee on Rural Education, 1943).

Location of the rural schools and the interest of parents in education for their children also prompted many farm dwellers to migrate to the cities. Children living in rural communities started attending schools in towns and cities of 2,500 population or more because of the distance from any school, or from one of proper grade level (Cook and Gaumnitz, 1931).



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## The Contrast Between the Urban and The Rural Schools

The conditions of rural schools prompted rural residents to realize that their schools did not satisfy their own needs, or compete in quality with the schools of their city counterparts (Finney and Schafer, 1920). The general picture was that of a multiplicity of small, relatively ineffective schools, inequitably distributed and supported (Cook and Guamnitz, 1931). The following statement gleamed from a National Education Association (1960:37) report on "One Teacher Schools" conveys the situation that existed in many one-teacher schools in 1930:

> In many instances the buildings are so old and so poorly constructed that they are unsafe for the children during storms and severe weather.
>
> Classrooms have windows on two, three, and sometimes on four sides which, even then, are insufficient in number to give half as much light as should be furnished from one side only;...the window shades are torn, broken or missing altogether...
>
> The floors, ceilings, and walls are often so defective that the room could not be evenly heated and ventilated with a large basement furnace and fan, much less with the old open box stove which is still quite generally used...
>
> Everywhere young, well-trained, and enthusiastic teachers enter rural communities to work in school buildings which have no extra rooms such as workrooms, libraries, or teachers' rooms; nor such built-in features as bookcases, lunch cupboards, etc., about which they learned at the teachers colleges. The ambitious rural youths enter these buildings with unsightly nails of all kinds and sizes on the walls, on which they may hang their garments. They have no safe and sanitary place for their lunch baskets, and quite frequently they are supplied with unsafe water. Innocent

> children are forced to use toilets that are both indecent and totally unsanitary and they have no facilities for washing and drying their hands after the use of the toilets.

To further depict the gravity of the rural school situation tables 4, 5, and figure 1 are especially meaningful. (Insert table 4 here) Table 4 illustrates the financial disparity between urban and rural schools in 1940. Although this represents only one year, the pattern represents a significant time period. (Insert table 5 and figure 1 here) Table 5 and figure 1 represent two different periods and somewhat different levels of educational attainment. The point in both instances is that rural school teachers do not have the professional training of urban teachers. Basically the tables and figure indicate a disparity in resources and personnel expertise between rural and urban schools.

The Roosevelt Rural Life Commission of 1909 evaluated the situation of the rural school as one of the most serious problems of American rural life (Knight, 1922; U.S. Senate Documents, 1909; Works and Lesser, 1942). Some of the observations of the Commission were as follows:

"The schools are held to be largely responsible for ineffective farming, lack of ideals and the drift to town. This not because the rural schools, as a whole, are declining, but because they are in a state of arrested development and have not yet put themselves in consonance with all the recently changed conditions of life." (U.S. Senate Documents, 1909: 53). The same Commission indicated that rural schools did not teach pupils how to live. Also the school should be fundamentally redirected. This required that the teacher himself be part of the



0010

community and not a migratory factor. There was also a move for co-ordination between the forces of the community and the planning of work beyond the school for youth and adults. The attempt of the Rural Life Commission was to "ruralize" the school curriculum, to give the students the kind of training that would be of immediate benefit for their environment (Works and Lesser, 1942). The Commission urged a new emphasis upon agriculture and homemaking, and indoctrination with the superiority of rural life; it looked at the rural school as a community center (Butterworth and Dawson, 1952).

Rural schools did not improve. The little red school persisted with limited academic programs and poor facilities. (Table 6 insert here) Table 6 presents a clear pciture of the facilities in 1958-59. Little beyond the three R's was offered, and educators did not have any reason beyond dedication to remain teaching in rural schools (Carney, 1931). Teachers were frequently untrained, itinerant and underpaid when compared with the salaries of city teachers. The situation in the one-teacher school was the least favorable (Cook and Gaunmitz, 1931). (Place table 7 here) A cursory look at this table indicates that the salary situation for rural teachers has improved, but the deficit remains. A note of caution is in order. The rural-urban dichotomy today may also be a function of regional differences. Although the differentials cited above do not remain as paramount, identification is important in isolating contributing factors to the consolidation movement.

Thus far factors such as teachers professional training and education have been cited. Also reference has been made to the poor facilities present in rural areas. Perhaps basic to these problems was

the differential between rural and urban areas in expenditure per pupil. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the difference vividly. [Place Figure 2 and 3 here] The variation can be accounted for by the differences in proportions of rural and urban population and the low revenue production of agricultural areas. This low income production in rural areas, coupled with a large proportion of children, exacerbated the problem of adequately supporting rural schools (Smith, 1947)

Contrary to some uninformed belief, the rural-urban differential was not a case of rural area residents idly sitting by. In fact, many rural areas put forth admirable efforts to support their schools. [Insert Figure 4 here] The strong effort made by many rural states to finance their schools is illustrated by the outlay of monies well above available estimated revenue for each child if each state made an average effort. Nonetheless, the dominantly rural states came out substantially lower even though they made a greater effort in proportion to fiscal resources (Smith, 1947).

School term length is a particularly important variable in any appraisal of rural and urban education. The presence of children in school is antecedent to almost any other point of comparison. Testimony to its importance is the presence in every state today of a set number of days which each school system must be in session. Here is another point where the differences between rural and urban schools were glaring. [Insert Table 8 and Figure 5] Although the data bases of Table 8 and Figure 5 are more than ten years apart, the rural-urban differential in school term length is still present.

The number of days a student spends in school is as important as is the curriculum. Smaller schools could not offer the variety of courses

that larger schools could. Ungraded classes, inadequate equipment, crowded teaching schedules. etc. make it highly improbable that course diversity could be present, especially in the rural high schools. Advanced subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Math (Trigonometry and Geometry), and foreign languages could not usually be offered (Taylor and Jones, 1964). Whereas the urban schools, due to their larger size, could offer the variety of course offerings that would allow curriculum flexibility.

Another crucial factor which surfaced in the comparisons between rural and urban schools was basically a nationalistic response. Due to population distribution, Americans who had been in this country the longest were concentrated in rural areas where schools are poor. Whereas children of foreign-born whites were mainly in urban areas. To ensure the equal education of "Old Americans" with immigrants something had to be done to improve rural schools (Smith, 1953).

Rural schools for blacks will not be examined separately. However, brief mention is in order to indicate that conditions were not the same. Rural schools for Blacks were inferior to those for Whites. For example, in 1928 the total enrollment of whites in fifteen southern states in public elementary and high school was 84.2 per cent and 14.6 per cent respectively of school age white children. Whereas blacks in public elementary and high school was 71 per cent and 3.7 per cent respectively of school age black children. Black students' school term was 25 days less than that of white students. It is apparent that black students were not provided for adequately in facilities, supplies, trained teachers, and salaries in the southern states (Cook and Gaunmitz, 1931).

Perhaps one of the best pictures of rural schools for blacks in the

1940's was presented by Alphonso Pinkey (1975: 58-59): "...It is in a dilapidating building, once whitewashed, standing in a rocky field unfit for cultivation. Dust-covered weeds spread a carpet all around, except for an uneven, bare area, on one side, which looks like a ball field. Behind the school is a small building with a broken, sagging door. As we approach, a nervous middle-age woman comes to the door of the school. She greets us in a discouraged voice marred by a speech impediment. Escorted inside, we observe that the broken benches are crowded to three times their normal capacity. Only a few battered books are in sight, and we look in vain for maps or charts. We learn that four grades are assembled there."

## Genesis of the Consolidation Movement

The consolidated school movement was one of the most significant innovations in American education. Rural residents came to believe that they had as much right as any other class of citizens to the good things of life, and that democracy cannot succeed in a country where a considerable number of citizens cannot participate in the enjoyment of the entire social heritage. Rural citizens found that they could not get along without good schools. To solve the problems of rural education, the general agreement among rural residents was the consolidation of schools (Finney and Schafer, 1920). There are many connotations in which consolidation is used (Smith, 1953). However, Marion B. Smith (1938) posits that consolidation of the schools is the movement directed to correct or relieve the weaknesses of the rural school system existent in America. The key aspects were the size of the schools through the employment of transportation, which made possible the concentration of students from several small schools into a larger school, and a new direction of educational activity.

The first attempt at school consolidation occurred in Massachusetts in 1869. Legislation was also passed to provide free transportation to school. Quincy, east of Boston, had the first school in 1874, in which transportation was available for students. Public transportation, rather

than individual transportation, has been encouraged as a condition to accelerate the process of consolidation. In Minnesota, state aid was withheld from schools that used individual transportation. The state acknowledged it to be a great benefit to own comfortable vans, employ drivers, fix schedules, and enforce systematic performance of the service.

In the wheat-belt states the case in favor of public transportation was not clear due to the relative spareness of the population and the low tax value of the land. In some regions, a full bus load required a long drive for pupils. Instances are cited of students riding thirteen miles one way daily to school (Finney and Schaefer, 1920; Butterworth and Dawson, 1952; Nelson, 1948). The cotton belt states that had been working under the county system from the beginning of the establishment of the schools, made accelerated steps toward school consolidation (Cubberly, 1914). Smith (1938: 15-16) asserted that educators and sociolgists agreed that consolidation of schools has considerable merit based on the following benefits:

1. The consolidated school would furnish better-equipped teachers and a more adequate supervision and administration for the schools.
2. More adequate school plants, located on school grounds, more centrally situated, and more suitable for school purposes, would be erected.
3. The school term would be lengthened.
4. The consolidated school would serve as a natural social center for the area.
5. A widened acquaintance group would be formed by the children.

6. The plan should hasten provisions for the extension of work to high school level.

7. An inevitable tendency to increase the school attendance and the services of agriculture colleges and normal schools would result.

8. A better program of studies could be provided, based on the social needs of the children and the nature of their mental and physical growth.

9. The consolidated school furnishes the number of pupils necessary to supply wholesome competition and stimulus in school work, to carry through adequate grading, to develop group and project work, and to organize many socially significant types of extra-curricular activities.

10. Education of the adults of the community would be fostered.

11. The health of the children would be safeguarded.

12. Improvement of roads would result because of the necessity of transporting the children to school.

## Types of Consolidation Plans

Cubberly (1914) presented three plans of consolidation based on township, multiple-district county, and county organization. The township plan involved abandonment of all district schools. Students attended schools in the center of the township. Transportation to school was provided by the township. Ohio was the prime exemplar of this plan in the early years of consolidation. The multiple district county plan was developed in Minnesota at the turn of the century. The county commissioners of any county, on petetion of twenty-five per cent of the residents,



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appointed a school commission of seven. One member of the commission was then appointed to be county superintendent of schools. This commission studied the geographical, educational, and social conditions of the county. Based on recommendations made by the school commission, proposals would be made to divide the county into consolidated school districts ranging from four to six miles square. Proposals would then be presented to county residents for a vote. Upon approval, consolidated schools would replace the scattered rural schools. The county plan which is quite prevalent in the south is based on the county being the unit of administration for the schools.

Other variations of school organization are modifications of the three basic plans cited above. One of these innovations was the utilization of contractual agreements between school districts which remained autonomous but negotiated agreements to educate their children together. Another mixed-type arrangement had each district provide its own elementary education and either contract with other districts for high school education or set up a high school cooperatively with other districts on a regional basis (Wayland, 1958). Orchestration of the plans was different, but the primary goal was to streamline rural education through the aggregation in some fashion of larger numbers of students. This in turn would facilitate the development of benefits to rural schools which were cited above.

## Effects of School Consolidation

The fundamental aim of the consolidation movement in America was to

make life more satisfying to the residents of rural areas. The consolidation movement brought about a rejuvenation of hope for the rural resident (Lindstrom, 1960; Taylor, 1968).

In fact a consciousness developed in regard to school quality. A one room school was considered a reproach to the community that tolerated it. Owners and tenants wanted schools to suit their needs, and demanded improvment. The school system, according to American tradition, could be one of the instruments by which the rural inhabitant could possibly achieve his aspirations. This new trend in rural education could possibly help residents in their quest to acquire better homes, better farms, better marketing facilities, better churches, better roads, better communication between neighbors, more enjoyable social life, and a larger political influence. In essence, the advent of a more effective education system was envisioned as a vehicle to cure a multiplicity of rural ills. The subsequent rapid decrease of one-district school systems and one-teacher schools are illustrated quite vividly by tables 9 and 10. [Insert Tables 9 and 10] One key aspect of these tables is the extremely vigorous consolidation movement in the rural areas of the country. For example in table 9, in the lower southeast geographic area, the number of school districts has decreased by 88.5 per cent from 1932 to 1958. Looking at the same region on table 10, the number of one-teacher schools from 1918 to 1958 decreased by 96.4 per cent. In fact, cursory examination of these tables illustrates that the trend throughout the country has been toward consolidation. Although the movment is stronger in some regions than others, the pervasiveness is evident.

Consolidation had many advantages over the little red school house arrangement. The most basic improvement was in facilities. Comfortable buildings with large pupil capacities, heating plants, lighting, play

facilities, modern desks, laboratories and libraries. Students' social lives were also improved by an expanded school enrolment. A variety of activities such as music, drama, academic clubs, career clubs, athletics, etc. were available.

Students were not the only ones to benefit from consolidation. Teacher conditions improved considerably. Better equipped classrooms, laboratories, and most importantly better salaries (Slacks, 1938; Rushing 1967) improved working conditions in rural schools. In 1943, the average annual salary for a southern rural teacher was only $666 as compared with $1,104 per urban teacher. The comparable salaries for the nation as a whole were $1,374 for the rural, and $1,952 for the urban teacher (Report of the Southern Rural Life Conference, 1943: 59). Basically the salary structure of rural schools begin to improve with the advent of consolidation. The contemporary difference may be more a function of regional differentiation than a urban-rural dichotomy.

Some other advantages of consolidation were present in several areas. The school term was longer, the academic environment was more stimulating, and competitive adult education programs were developed. Particularly important was the improvement of health conditions and safety via modern school buildings and improved transportation. The merging of small school units into larger ones gave an answer to the needs of enlarging the basis of financial support. Costs per pupil became less, and specialized services (counseling and vocational guidance) could be offered (Kreitlow, 1954).

Even with all the positive aspects that resulted from consolidation, problems also surfaced. One such problem involved children leaving the

neighborhood to attend school. Children were also believed exposed to infectious diseases by contact with students from a wider attendance area. Taxpayers also had to assume additional burdens to facilitate the construction of new and larger facilities (Kreitlow, 1954). In concert with the problems that evolved with consolidation are residual problems that were present pre-consolidation and remained during the movement. Wayland (1958: 227-230) outlines several of these persistent problems:

1. Population density becomes a factor in school organization and transportation. For example the grade distribution of students over an area could cause considerable problems.

2. Agriculture provides an opportunity for unskilled and semi-skilled students to be productively employed either at home or hired out. Boys who want to drop out have a seemingly productive alternative. This has contributed to the higher drop-out rate of rural males.

3. Farming has been traditionally an occupation in which a high level of educational attainment was not considered necessary. Although the level of attainment is rising, students often are not exposed to peers of differential styles of life. Hence the stimulus to higher education may not be as strong.

4. Racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural factors have to be taken into account. The concentration of blacks in the rural south should be kept in focus. Rural school segregation pre and post consolidation and subsequent dynamics after the 1954 Supreme Court decision is a particularly important variable to keep in mind. Ethnic and religious groups in the West North Central States and Utah respectively have cultural manifestations which have resulted in their children departing from the rural norm in educational attainment. In fact their educational attainment is either equal or superior to urban areas. Basically the educational attainment of rural youth is rapidly approaching the national norm. Therefore, different population groups in rural America must be approached with some knowledge of racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural factors kept in focus as education problems are addressed.

The following two interrelated problems also remain. First, despite the massive consolidation movement there still remains a significant number of small rural schools. Tamblyn (1971) indicates that thirty three per cent of rural schools enroll 300 or fewer students, almost eighty per cent of them have enrollments of less than 2,500, and one-third enroll less than 5,000. So in some cases the schools are still too small to offer a comprehensive educational program. Another problem particularly interesting to the sociologist, involves the process in which the districts should be joined together. The pattern in the South has been to use the county which has traditionally been an important administrative and legal unit. However, other areas of the country have sought to identify sociological communities of towns, villages, cities, service areas, or trade areas to base their consolidation. In fact when sociological communities coincide with school districts, the result is usually more successful (Wayland, 1958).

## Policy Implications

This paper has reported factors that brought about rural school consolidation. Several points that seem germane to policy for rural schools are school/community organization, education for rural/urban living, rural disadvantaged students, and equal educational opportunity for rural schools.

School/community organization is particularly difficult to handle when a region like the south has traditionally utilized the county as the unit of organization. However, the success reported in areas like New York state using the sociological community as basis of district organization cannot be overlooked (Wayland, 1958). Smith (1953) speaks to this issue by stating emphatically that the interest of the community should be consulted before

consolidation. Furthermore, school consolidation should accompany, not anticipate the expansion of the community area. To ignore community interests and boundaries could lead to educational absenteeism and community disintegration. Whereas consultation with the community and subsequent organization to promote sociological communities may provide better community interaction.

Another aspect of this quest to promote better interaction within the school community is the orientation of the curriculum. If rural schools have a curriculum developed mainly for urban youth, it may be an advantage for those students moving to urban areas. It may also diminish rural and urban differences (Wayland, 1958). On the other hand it may exacerbate polarity between urban and rural areas. In fact students may develop biases based on exposure to curriculum with certain perspectives. The development of a well-rounded education program is of parmount importance. Parochialism of an urban or rural nature should not be present. Students should be prepared to live in a world that is changing and diversified. Breathilt (1960: 130-141) describes the type of education needed in rural schools is to provide for the population that wants to stay in rural areas. In addition this education must prepare the rural resident for the demands and responsibilities of an urban society. Stated somewhat different, but also conveying basically the same message is Herrick, (1945: 86) who says rural inhabitants of America need an education adapted to the differences between rural and urban settings. This involves knowledge of how to retain the top soil on the land, how to raise and market the right crops, and how to know and understand our cities, our country, and



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the place of our country in world affairs.

Provision for the correct type of curriculum philosophy also alludes to the programs available for disadvantaged students. Tamblyn (1971: 21) says that rural schools need to give more attention to disadvantaged youth. This in effect means curriculum and programs that speak to the needs of all students. Students need better preparation in academic and/or marketable skills for either rural or urban living. For those students who plan to move to urban areas, education is often a significant factor. Even for those who remain in rural areas, the rapidly changing character of agriculture involves technical skills, which makes education a prerequisite for good farming (Wayland, 1958; Lindstrom, 1965). Hopefully, curriculum innovations and the acknowledgement by school personnel of the disadvantaged student will mitigate against the dropout rate and the lower educational attainment in rural areas.

A key factor in being able to provide for disadvantaged students and raise education attainment in rural areas is the availability of equal educational opportunity. In this paper equal educational opportunity is in reference to the differentials between rural and urban schools such as facilities, teacher training, teacher salaries, expenditures per student, school year length, curriculum diversity, etc. Many of these past inequities are virtually non-existent (school year length), but differences are still present in other aspects. Advocacy in this regard is not to be construed that the writers see the elimination of these inequities as an "open sesame." They are basically a necessary but not sufficient component. Attitudes and values of teachers, administrators, students and parents are also part of this process. Once the traditional

indicators of equal educational opportunity are in order, strategies can be developed to promote more positive attitudes and values among the school participants.



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Table 1

Wealth Movement from Farm to Cities Resulting in Migration to Cities, U.S. 1920-1950

| Item | Amount of Movement 1920-1950 | Annual Average |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Rearing and Educating migrants (Migratory loss from farms in the same period 34,400,000) $392 represents annual loss of wealth per migrant (expenses paid by families)<br><br>$20 represents annual loss of wealth for migrant for education (assuring migrant had 8th grade education).<br><br>$412 Total annual loss per migrant | 425 million | $14.17 million |
| 2. Settlement of Estates with City Relatives | 24 million | $800 million |
| 3. Interest paid on mortgages. Indebtness to non-farm dwellers | 13 billion | 430 billion |
| 4. Rents paid by farmers to non-farm dwellers | 18 billion | 600 million |
| Totals | 480 billion | 16 billion |

Source: Erven J. Long and Peter Dorner, "Excess Farm Population and the Loss of Agricultural Capital, "Land Economics, November 1954, pp. 363-368.



0026

Table 2

Changes in the Proportion of the Total United States Population which were Rural Farm and Rural Nonfarm, between 1910 and 1950

| Year | Rural Nonfarm | Rural Farm |
|---|---|---|
| 1910 | 19.7 | 34.6 |
| 1920 | 19.1 | 29.7 |
| 1930 | 19.3 | 24.5 |
| 1940 | 20.5 | 23.0 |
| 1950 | 21.8 | 19.1 |

Source: Carl C. Taylor and Associates, Rural Life in the United States, as quoted by Lowry Nelson in The Fifty-First Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952, p,31



0027

Table 3

Movement To and From Farms of the United States Population between 1922 and 1928

| Year | Persons leaving farms for cities | Persons arriving | Net movement |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1922 | 2,000,000 | 880,000 | 1,120,000 |
| 1924 | 2,075,000 | 1,396,000 | 679,000 |
| 1926 | 2,155,000 | 1,135,000 | 1,020,000 |
| 1928 | 1,960,000 | 1,362,000 | 598,000 |

Source: George Works, "Economic and Social Factors of Rural Life," in Guy Montrose Whiple (ed.), The Thirtieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1931, p. 21.



0098

Table 4

Inequities Between Rural and Urban Schools 1940

| Characteristics | Rural | Urban |
|---|---|---|
| Population | 57,245,573 | 74,423,702 |
| Population Age 5-17 | 15,041,289 | 14,703,957 |
| Average Length of School Term (Days) | 167.6 | 181.7 |
| Annual School Expenditure per pupil | $65.56 | $97.08 |
| Estimated Value of property per pupil enrolled | $185.00 | $405.00 |

Source: The Committee of Rural Education, "Still Sits The School House by the Road," Chicago, 1943, p.34.



0029

Table 5

Percentage of Teachers having two years or more of College in Rural Schools and in the Cities, in 1929, in The United States

| | Percent |
|---|---|
| Teachers in one-and-two-teacher schools in open country | 38 |
| In three or more teacher schools in open country | 72 |
| In villages of less than 2,500 population | 79 |
| In cities of 2,500 to 9,999 population | 88 |
| In cities of 10,000 to 99,999 population | 90 |
| In cities of 100,000 or more population | 91 |

Source: George A. Works and Simon C. Lesser. Rural America Today. Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1942, p.26.

Table 6

Facilities Available in One-Room Schools, 1958-59

| Facilities | Condition | | None Available |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Adequate | Not Adequate | |
| Cloak Room | 69.8% | 11.3% | 18.9% |
| Library Corner | 56.3 | 26.2 | 17.5 |
| Store Room | 46.7 | 12.3 | 41.0 |
| General Activity Room | 32.3 | 6.9 | 60.9 |
| Work Room | 30.5 | 4.8 | 64.7 |
| Science Corner | 24.5 | 16.8 | 58.7 |
| Kitchen | 18.0 | 4.2 | 77.8 |

Source: National Education Association, Research Division. One Teacher Schools Today. Research Monograph 1960-M1, Washington, D.C., p. 39.



0031

Table 7

Average Salaries of One-Room School Teachers and of Urban Classroom Teachers, 1924-25 through 1958-59

| Years | One-room school teachers | Urban Classroom teachers [a] | Percent of salary of urban classroom teachers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1924-25..... | $ 761[b] | $1,757 | 43.3% |
| 1929-30..... | 788[b] | 1,898 | 41.5 |
| 1951-52..... | 2,208[c] | 3,683 | 60.0 |
| 1958-59..... | 2,921 | 5,313 | 55.0 |

[a] Estimated from: National Education Association, Research Division. Salaries and Salary Schedules of Urban School Employees, 1958-59. Research Report 1959-R16. Washington, D.C.: the Association, October 1959. p. 9.

[b] From: Gaumnitz, Walter H. Status of Teachers and Principals Employed in the Rural Schools of The United States. U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Bulletin 1932, No. 3. Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1932. p. 57.

[c] From: National Education Association, Research Division. "Rural Teachers in 1951-52." Research Bulletin 31: 40; February 1953.

Source: National Education Association, Research Division

One Teacher Schools Today. Research Monograph

1960-M1, Washington, D.C., p. 35.



00332

Table 8

Length of Term of Which American Students were enrolled in Rural High Schools in 1927-28

| Length of term | Urban | | Rural | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| 160 days or Less | 7,449 | 0.3 | 117,754 | 10.9 |
| 161 to 180 | 1,074,206 | 40.3 | 824,057 | 76.4 |
| 180 or more | 1,580,709 | 59.4 | 137,275 | 12.7 |
| Total enrollment | 2,662,364 | 100.0 | 1,079,086 | 100.0 |

Source: Katherine M. Cook and W. H. Gaumnitz. "Availability of Schools in Rural Communities." In Guy Montrose Whipple (ed.), The Thirtieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1931, p. 92.



00333

Table 9

Number of School districts by geographic regions and percentage decrease: 1931-32 to 1957-58

| Geographic Regions | 1931-32[a] | 1947-48[a] | 1952-53[a] | 1957-58[b] | Percentage Decrease 1932-1958 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contine tal U.S. | 127,530 | 105,946 | 67,045 | 48,036 | 62.3 |
| New England | 1,585 | 1,564 | 1,551 | 1,543 | 2.6 |
| Mid-east | 12,756 | 7,860 | 6,159 | 4,564 | 64.2 |
| Great Lakes | 30,032 | 25,659 | 15,315 | 9,829 | 67.3 |
| Plains | 43,060 | 39,194 | 29,862 | 21,238 | 50.7 |
| Upper Southeast | 1,153 | 586 | 559 | 553 | 52.0 |
| Lower Southeast | 11,262 | 8,123 | 2,563 | 1,299 | 88.5 |
| South west | 13,463 | 8,235 | 4,463 | 3,573 | 73.5 |
| Rocky Mountain | 6,338 | 10,094 | 2,926 | 2,483 | 60.8 |
| Far West | 7,881 | 4,631 | 3,647 | 2,954 | 62.5 |

[a]/ Adopted from a statistical Survey of School District Organization in the United States: 1954-55 (Prepared for the White House Conference on Education. Government Printing office, 1950; p.7)

[b]/ Data Drawn from a survey of the Status of School Districts in the United States: 1957-58, National Education Association, Rural Service

Source: Walter Gaummitz, Small Schools Are Growing Larger, U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare. Circular Number 601, September, 1959.

Table 10

Number of One-Teacher Schools, by Twenty Year Intervals, and Percentage Relationships to All Schools, and Percentages Decreases from 1918 to 1958, by Geographic Regions

| Geographic region | 1917-18 | | 1937-38 | | 1957-58 | | Percentage decrease 1918-1958 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | |
| I | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| New England | 6,147 | 42.8 | 3;398 | 40.8 | 520 | 8.7 | 91.5 |
| Mideast | 21,413 | 66.2 | 17,755 | 57.8 | 549 | 3.9 | 97.4 |
| Great Lakes | 38,659 | 80.8 | 11,178 | 43.7 | 3,830 | 18.5 | 90.1 |
| Plains | 51,956 | 87.8 | 42,656 | 76.4 | 13,641 | 53.1 | 73.7 |
| Upper Southeast | 21,876 | 74.8 | 17,721 | 63.1 | 13,654 | 28.0 | 83.3 |
| Lower Southeast | 30,276 | 61.9 | 13,425 | 38.8 | 1,101 | 5.7 | 96.4 |
| South West | 11,713 | 47.8 | 5,920 | 40.0 | 696 | 7.1 | 94.1 |
| Rocky Mountain | 7,598 | 75.6 | 5,078 | 56.7 | 1,303 | 28.1 | 82.9 |
| Far West | 6,399 | 57.3 | 3,516 | 32.2 | 489 | 5.9 | 92.4 |

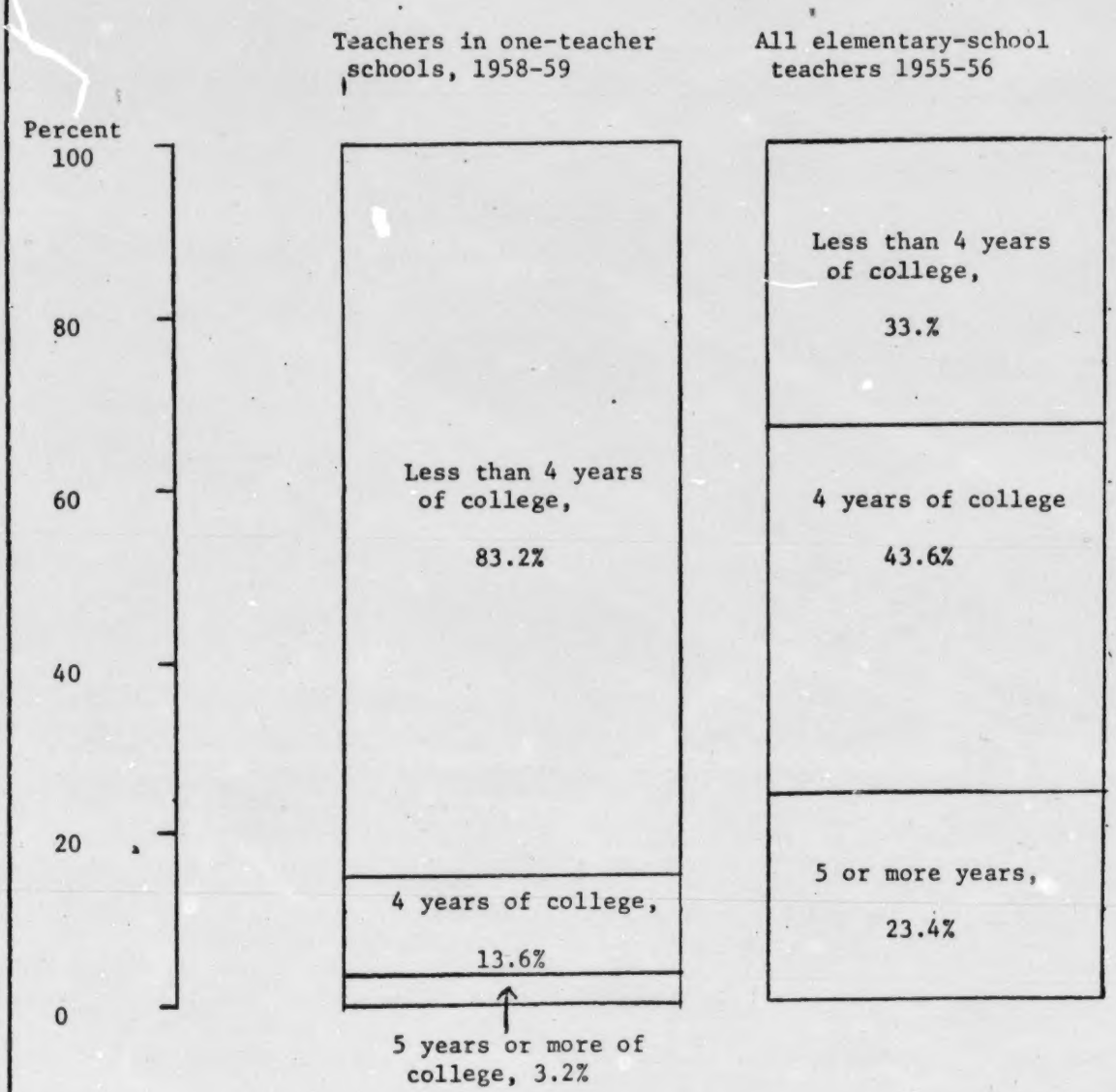
Source: Walter Gaummitz, Small Schools Are Growing Larger, U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare. Circular Number 601, September, 1959.



(1935)

Figure 1

Preparation of Elementary-School Teachers

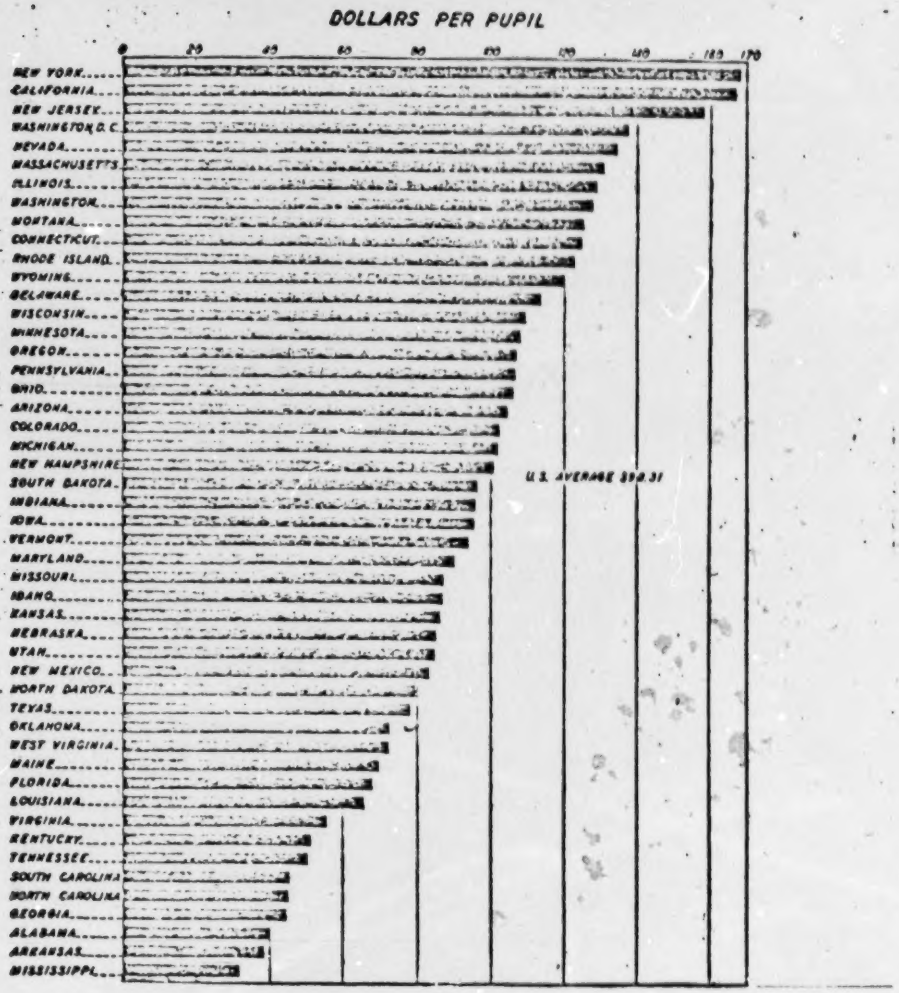



Source: National Education Association, Research Division. Research Monograph 1960-M1, Washington, D.C., p. 28.

0036

Figure 2

Current Expenditure per Pupil in Average Daily Attendance by States, 1939-1940



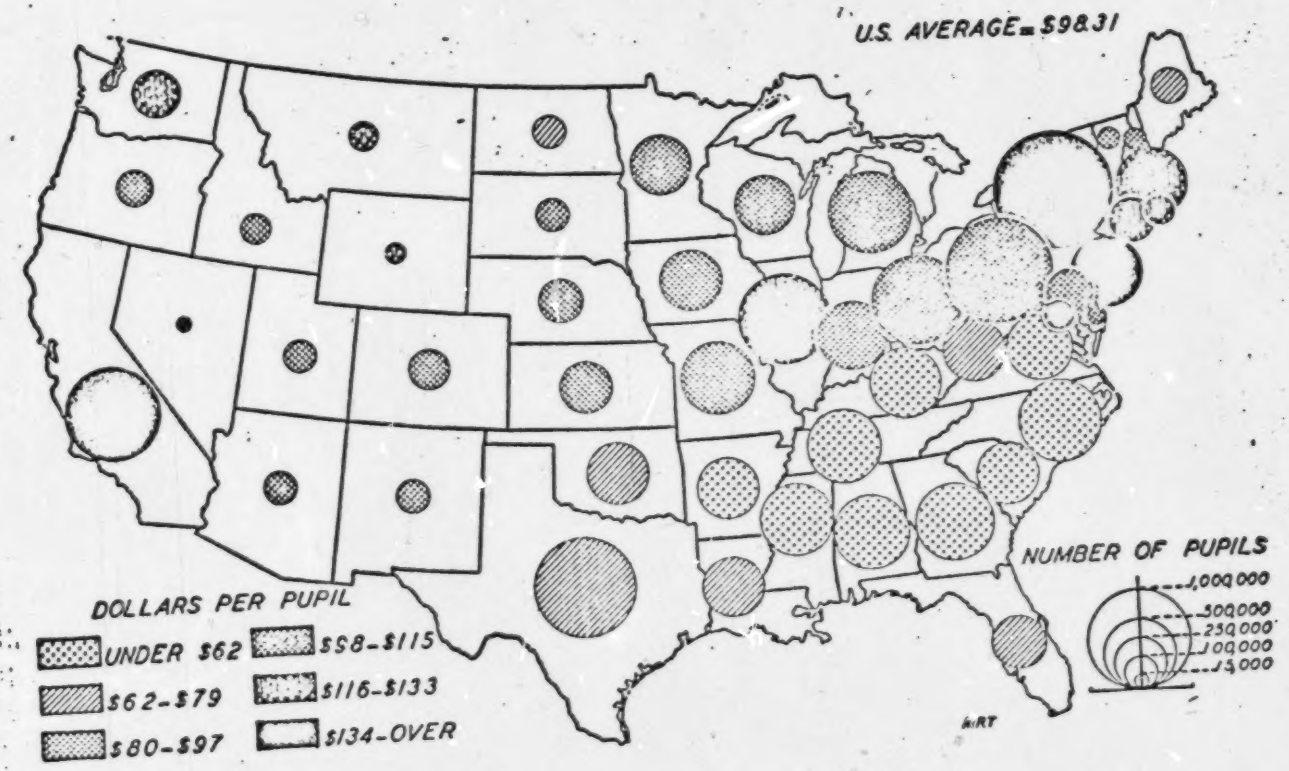

Source: Blose and Alves,"Statistics of State School Systems in 1930-40 and 1941-42,"as quoted by T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life, New York, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, p.391.



0037

Figure 3

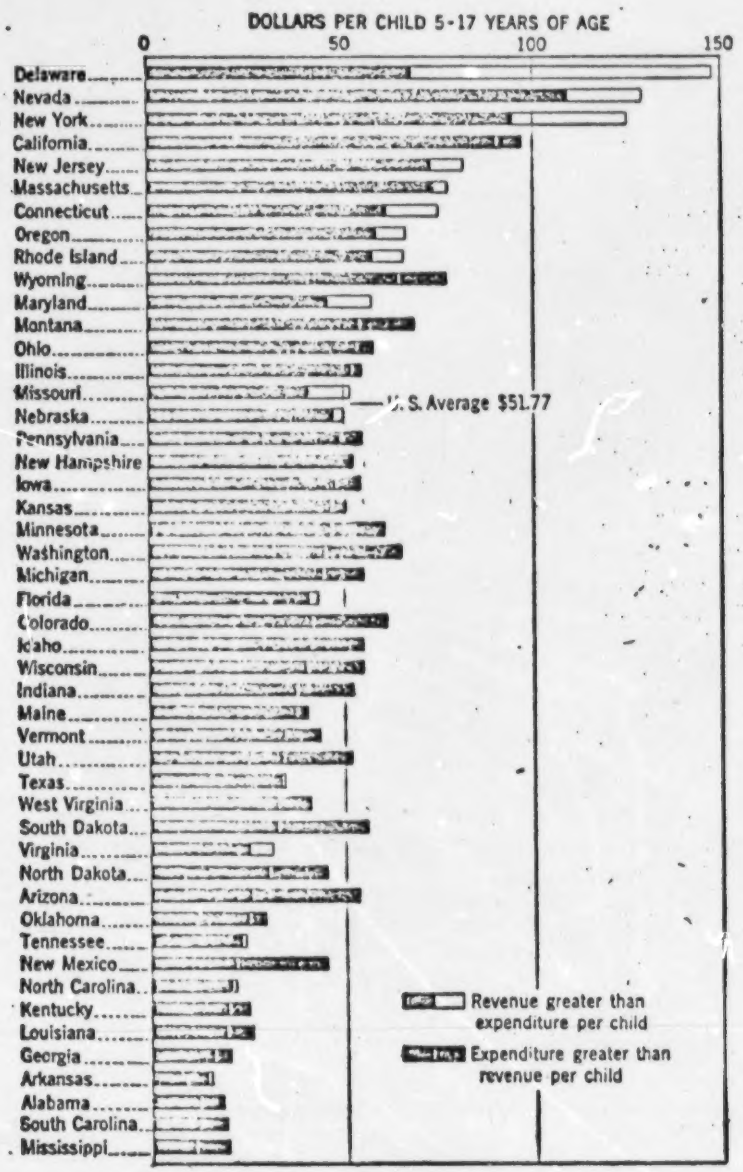
Current Expenditure per Pupil in Average Daily Attendance in the Various States, 1939-1940




Source: Blose and Alves,"Statistics of State School Systems in 1939-40 and 1941-42," as quoted by T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life, New York, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, p. 392

Figure 4

Current Expenditure per Child of School Age, 1935 to 1936, and Estimated Revenue Available for the Education of Each Child if Each State Made Average Effort, 1935.



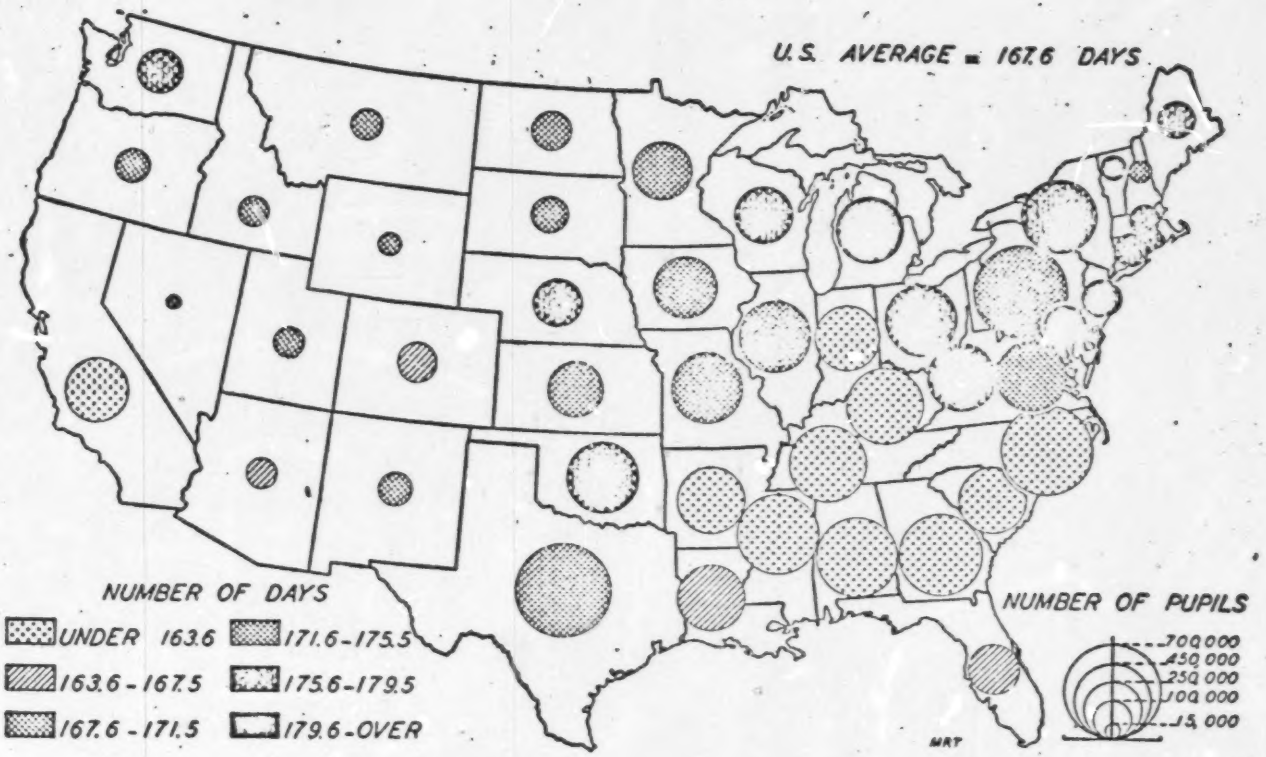

Source: Report of Advisory Committee on Education, Washington, 1938, p.21; as quoted by T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life, New York, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, p.395.



00339

Figure 5

Average Number of Days in the Rural School Term by States, 1939-1940




Source: Blose and Alves,"Statistics of State School Systems in 1939-40 and 1941-42,"as quoted by T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life, New York, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, p.398.

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